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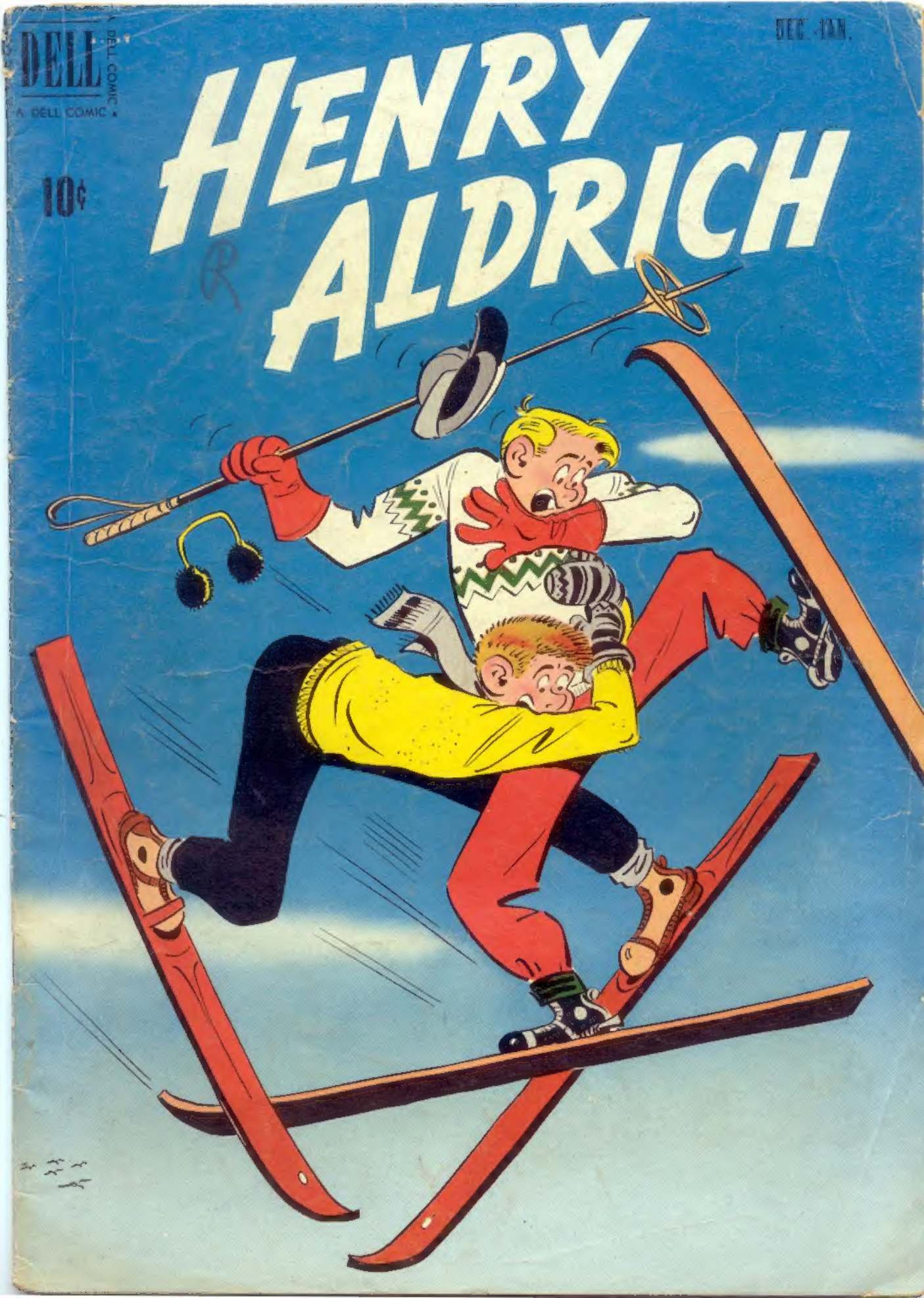
DEC.-JAN.

HENRY ALDRICH



Henry Aldrich and the Christmas Party

"I'll get it, Mother," said Henry, going to the telephone. "It's probably for me, anyway."

Henry Aldrich carefully laid the apple he was eating down on its end, and picked up the telephone.

"Hello . . . yes, . . . hi, Geraldine," he began, "uh . . . oh, Eloise Johnson! Hi, Eloise! How are you?"

Eloise explained that she was entertainment chairman for the Christmas party the Centerville High Girls' Club was having Friday night. The party was for the underprivileged children of the neighborhood.

"And Henry," she continued, "we need a Santa Claus. Could you be one for the children?"

"Gee whiz, I'd like to help out," Henry answered, thinking fast, "I'm sorry, but I have a date Friday night. I'm sure you can get someone else . . ."

"Can you suggest someone, Henry?"

"Why, yes, Eloise, what about George Bigelow?" said Henry. "He'd make a good Santa."

"Thanks, Henry, I'll call him right away."

"Ah, Eloise, one thing . . ."

"Yes, Henry?"

"Er, don't mention I suggested him, will you, Eloise?"

"No, Henry."

" 'Bye, Eloise."

" 'Bye, Henry."

"It's not that I don't want to help," muttered Henry to himself, picking up his apple, "but being a Santa Claus, that's too much."

"But, hold on here, I'd better get my date, just to keep things straight."

"I'm sorry, Henry," answered Geraldine, when Henry called, "but I'm busy Friday night. You see, I'm refreshment chairman at the Girls' Club Christmas party for underprivileged . . ."

"What?" broke in Henry. "Geraldine, you're going too?"

"Certainly, Henry, it'll be fun. All the girls will be there and several boys whom Eloise is getting to help out."

Henry gulped. He began to visualize a different picture of George Bigelow's Santa. He quickly said good-bye and called Eloise.

"Yes, Henry," she said, "I got George to do it, but thanks for being so interested. 'Bye!"

"I'm too late," muttered Henry. "Now, I've got to get hold of George."

But, when Henry called, Mrs. Bigelow said that George had just left for the super-market.

Henry was desperate. He called Homer Brown and got him to drive downtown in his car.

"What's all this about, Henry?" Homer asked, as they went into the market together.

"I'll explain later, Homer," answered Henry. "Now, I've got to find George Bigelow."

George was in the canned foods section, trying to decide between canned peaches or canned pears when Henry approached.

"Well, well, if it isn't George Bigelow!" Henry exclaimed.

George said hello, and the two boys spoke briefly.

"Y'know, George," Henry said casually, "Christmas spirit is a great thing. I wish I could do something more for the community."

George's eyes narrowed suspiciously, "Ye-eah?"

When Henry began to elaborate on his ideas, George stopped him. "Okay, then," he said, "how would you like to play SANTA CLAUS?"

"I could think of nothing better, George!"

(Continued on inside back cover)

HENRY ALDRICH, No. 9, Dec.-Jan., 1952. Published bi-monthly by Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 261 Fifth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.; George T. Delacorte, Jr., President; Helen Meyer, Vice-President; Albert P. Delacorte, Vice-President. Subscriptions in U.S.A. 60 cents per year, single copies 10 cents. Foreign subscriptions $1.00 per year. Canadian subscriptions 60 cents per year. Copyright, 1951, by Clifford Goldsmith. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A. Designed and produced by Western Printing & Lithographing Co. The characters and the events portrayed in this publication are imaginary and fictitious, and any resemblance to actual happenings and persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

HENRY ALDRICH

HENRY! MARY! THAT WAS YOUR FATHER ON THE PHONE. HE'S BRINGING THE *MAYOR* HOME FOR DINNER!

GEE WHIZ-- CHICKEN LAST NIGHT, AND THE MAYOR TONIGHT! WE'RE REALLY EATING WELL, AREN'T WE?

DON'T BE FUNNY, HENRY... THIS MUST BE IMPORTANT TO FATHER.

IT CERTAINLY *IS* IMPORTANT . YOUR FATHER IS HOPING THAT THE MAYOR WILL MAKE HIM A COMMISSIONER. IT'S ONLY A DOLLAR-A-YEAR JOB, BUT--

HMPH-- WHAT MY FATHER WOULDN'T DO FOR MONEY!

IT'S A PRESTIGE JOB, HENRY.

MARY-- PLEASE GIVE ME A HAND IN THE KITCHEN.

WHAT CAN *I* DO?

YOU CAN KEEP OUT OF OUR WAY!

HMM . I GUESS IT *IS* AN HONOR TO HAVE HIS HONOR, THE MAYOR, OVER TO OUR HOUSE FOR DINNER.

I'LL BET GERALDINE WILL BE IMPRESSED!

HELLO, GERALDINE, THIS IS HENRY... HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET THE MAYOR?

ARE YOU TRYING TO GET RID OF ME, HENRY?

...IF YOU ARE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PALM ME OFF ON ANYONE ELSE! THERE'S ALWAYS GEORGE BIGELOW AND.. AND ..

?

DID YOU SAY THE *MAYOR?*

THAT'S WHAT I SAID, GERALDINE...

THE MAYOR IS COMING *HERE* FOR DINNER AND NO GEORGE BIGELOW... I MEAN, NO OTHER FELLOW CAN MAKE THAT STATEMENT!

OH--HENRY... HOW EXCITING!

I THOUGHT MAYBE *YOU* WOULD LIKE TO DROP IN *AFTER* DINNER...YOU KNOW, CASUAL-LIKE.

OH--I WOULD, HENRY... I MUST START SETTING MY HAIR *RIGHT AWAY!* SO GOOD-BYE FOR NOW!

PRESENTLY...

THERE, MOTHER, EVERYTHING IS FINE!

THE TEA SERVER... WHERE'S MY SILVER TEA SERVER?

OH--HOMER'S MOTHER NEEDED IT THE OTHER DAY, SO I LOANED IT TO HER...

WELL, YOU RUN RIGHT OVER TO HOMER'S AND GET IT BACK!

AND BE QUICK ABOUT IT!

Y-YES, MOTHER!

HENRY!

OOF!

OOPS!

!

SMACK!

COMMISSIONER

YOU CLUMSY FOOL!

ER-- SORRY!

GEE WHIZ-- THAT WAS THE MAYOR!

WHO WAS THAT STUPID BOY?

UH--I NEVER SAW HIM BEFORE IN MY LIFE!

ALICE... MARY... MEET HIS HONOR, THE MAYOR . AND GET A WHISK BROOM.

SOME IDIOT RAN INTO ME AND KNOCKED ME DOWN!

?

?

FATHER... WAS IT ANY IDIOT WE KNOW?

N-NO... IT WAS A PERFECTLY STRANGE IDIOT!

SHALL WE GO INTO THE PARLOR FOR SOME HORS D'OEUVRES, YOUR HONOR?

ALL RIGHT.

OH--NO!

MEANWHILE...

AND WHO SHOULD I RUN SMACK INTO... HIS HONOR HIMSELF!

GOSH, HENRY... DID YOU HURT HIS HONOR?

WELL, HE WASN'T **HAPPY** ABOUT IT! HE LOOKED ME RIGHT IN THE EYE AND CALLED ME A CLUMSY FOOL! NOW HOW AM I GOING TO FACE HIM?

YOU CAN'T WITH **THAT** FACE...

...BUT COME UPSTAIRS, HENRY... I HAVE AN IDEA!

?

SHORTLY...

THERE, HENRY... WITH MY FATHER'S OLD TAILS AND THAT FALSE MOUSTACHE, YOU CAN PRETEND YOU'RE THE BUTLER!

GEE WHIZ, HOMER... HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU?

I'LL JUST SNEAK IN THE BACK WAY...

DINNAH IS SERVED!

? ? ? ? ?

HERS

TWO COURSES LATER...

WH-WHAT'S THAT SWIMMING AROUND IN MY SOUP?

OH--OH--MY MOUSTACHE!

EXCUSE ME, YOUR HONOR...I'LL BRING YOU ANOTHER MOUSTACHE... I MEAN, ANOTHER SOUP!

?

SAY... HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEPLACE BEFORE?

UH--Y-YESSIR--I SERVED THE CHOPPED LIVER!

I'VE GOT TO MAKE SURE THE MOUSTACHE DOESN'T FALL OFF THIS TIME!

...SO I SAID TO THE GOVERNOR...

...NOW THAT I'M ELECTED, I'LL SHOW THE OPPOSITION THAT I'M *NOT* ALL WET!

OOP--

WHAT A LUCKY BREAK...THE MOUSTACHE STAYED ON!

? ? ??!!

IF HE DOESN'T APPOINT ME COMMISSIONER ON ACCOUNT OF YOU, I'LL CUT YOUR ALLOW-ANCE!!

UH-- YOU MEAN MY SALARY!

EASY, FATHER. .IT'S BAD ENOUGH I SPILLED THE SOUP. DON'T YOU SPILL THE BEANS!

LATER...

RING!

GEE WHIZ... I FORGOT I INVITED GERALDINE!

R-RING!

I'LL ANSWER IT!

HENRY--

SH-SH-- I'M INCOGNITO!

B-BUT--

HENRY... I CAME HERE TO MEET THE MAYOR.. WHY DID YOU DRAG ME INTO THE KITCHEN?

Y-YOU'LL MEET HIM, GERALDINE... IF--IF HE COMES IN HERE FOR A GLASS OF WATER!

SO!... I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO ENTER YOUR PARLOR...!

B-BUT--

I'M SURE GEORGE BIGELOW WOULD TAKE ME INTO HIS PARLOR!

B-BUT-- B-BUT-- I'M SUPPOSED TO BE THE BUTLER!

SLAM!

IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS-- BUT I FEEL I SHOULD TELL YOU... YOUR BUTLER IS ENTERTAINING HIS LADY FRIEND IN YOUR KITCHEN!

?

?

WHY DON'T YOU FIRE THE BUTLER, FATHER?

YES, AND I'LL HELP YOU!

TH-THERE'S NO ONE IN HERE!

RAN OFF, EH? I DON'T TRUST THAT BUTLER, ANYWAY!

IF YOU WANT MY ADVICE... I SUGGEST YOU COUNT YOUR SILVERWARE!

?

?

?

MY WALLET-- IT'S GONE! IT'S THAT BUTLER!

QUICK! CALL THE POLICE!

Y-YES, YOUR HONOR!

AND SO..

WE'LL FIND THEM, YOUR HONOR!

...AND THE GIRL, TOO... SHE MUST BE WORKING WITH HIM.

I-I THINK I'M GOING TO FAINT.

NOT NOW, ALICE... NOT NOW!

UH--CIGAR, MAYOR?

NO THANKS--I'LL SMOKE MY OWN...

OH, DEAR... MY WALLET! IT WAS IN THIS POCKET-- IT WASN'T STOLEN!

MEANWHILE...

WELL, WHY DIDN'T YOU EXPLAIN THAT TO ME BEFORE, HENRY?

GEE WHIZ, GERALDINE--I TRIED TO!

THERE THEY ARE!

STOP-- OR WE'LL SHOOT!

POLICE

P.D.

NICE WORK, MEN-- HAVE A COUPLE OF CIGARS!

THANKS!

I--I WAS GOING TO COME BACK TO FINISH THE DISHES-- YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO SEND FOR THE POLICE!

?

FOR ENTERTAINING THIS YOUNG LADY IN THE KITCHEN-- YOU'RE FIRED!

?

IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING, I HAD A LOVELY EVENING-- AND TO SHOW MY APPRECIATION MR ALDRICH--

YES?

COMMISSIONER...

I'M GOING TO LET YOU HAVE MY BUTLER!

!!?!

? ? ? ?

END

HENRY ALDRICH

GEE WHIZ! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SPORT COAT--AND ONLY TWELVE DOLLARS!

TIE SALE

SPECIAL $12.00

ELL'S MEN'S SHOP

RUSSELL'S MEN'S

I'M GOING TO RUN RIGHT HOME AND ASK MY FATHER IF HE'LL LET ME BUY IT!

JERRY-- REMOVE THAT $12.00 SPECIAL FROM THE WINDOW AND REPLACE IT WITH THE $50.00 IMPORT!

OKAY, BOSS.

FATHER--THEY'VE GOT A SPORT COAT IN THE WINDOW OF THE MEN'S SHOP--AND IT'S REALLY A BEAUTY FOR ONLY $12.00!

SO WHY TELL ME ABOUT IT, HENRY?

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO GET IT FOR ME BECAUSE IT'S SUCH A GOOD BUY!

NO SALE!

WELL--I THINK I'LL GO UP AND SHOWER AND DRESS--I'VE GOT A DATE TONIGHT...

SAM?

YES, ALICE?

Evening News

SAM--DON'T YOU THINK YOU WERE A BIT HARD ON HENRY?

LOOK, ALICE--IT'S HARD ON ME, TOO! I CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY HIM WHATEVER HE ASKS FOR!

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, SAM--$12.00 MAY NOT BE A LOT OF MONEY TO SOME *OTHER* FATHERS, BUT IT PROBABLY IS TO YOU. I'M SORRY I BUTTED IN.

RING!

NOW WHO CAN THAT BE?

HI YA, MRS ALDRICH. HENRY HOME?

YES, HOMER--HE'S TAKING A SHOWER.

I WON'T BOTHER HIM NOW. I'LL DROP BACK LATER.

OH, HOMER!

YES, MR. ALDRICH?

?

DO ME A FAVOR, HOMER...

...GO TO THE MEN'S SHOP AND GET THE SPORT COAT THAT'S IN THE WINDOW-- SIZE 36, AND CHARGE IT TO MY ACCOUNT.

SURE, MR. ALDRICH.

SAM...

YES?

MY SAM!

ALICE! PLEASE! THE CHILDREN MIGHT SEE YOU!

SHORTLY...

WOW! $50.00! MR. ALDRICH MUST BE LOADED WITH MONEY!

IMPORTED SPORT COATS $50.00

THAT SPORT COAT IN THE WINDOW PLEASE--SIZE 36. AND CHARGE IT TO MR. ALDRICH...IT'S FOR HIS SON, HENRY!

GOSH--WHOEVER HEARD OF ANYONE SPENDING ***THAT*** MUCH MONEY FOR A SPORT COAT FOR HIS ***SON!*** MY FATHER WOULDN'T SPEND THAT MUCH ON ONE FOR ***HIMSELF!***

HERE IT IS, MR. ALDRICH--AND IT'S SURE A DILLY!

QUICK, SAM--LET'S LOOK AT IT BEFORE HENRY COMES DOWN!

SAY--IT ***IS*** A BEAUTY! JUST FEEL THAT MATERIAL, ALICE!

AND LOOK AT THE HAND-STITCHING!

MMM...

IT'S SURE WORTH THE MONEY. I SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN 3 OF THEM!

$ 50.00
50.00
50.00
$150.00

I THINK HENRY IS OUT OF THE SHOWER!

HIDE IT, ALICE. WE'LL SURPRISE HIM WHEN HE COMES DOWN!

ALL RIGHT, SAM!

HOMER...NOT A WORD TO HENRY ABOUT THE SPORT COAT.

YESSIR.

HENRY, I JUST DROPPED OVER TO TELL YOU THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO DOUBLE-DATE WITH YOU TONIGHT.

WHY NOT, HOMER?

BECAUSE I'M DOWN TO THE LINT, HENRY-- SEE? NOT A PENNY!

W-E-L-L...I'LL *TREAT* TONIGHT, HOMER.

GEE, THAT'S SWELL OF YOU, HENRY! I'LL HURRY HOME AND MAKE A DATE!

ALL RIGHT, HOMER. SEE YOU LATER!

GOOD-BYE, FOLKS... AND DON'T WORRY, I DIDN'T SAY A WORD TO HENRY ABOUT THE SPORT COAT.

THAT'S GOOD, HOMER. I WANT IT TO BE A SURPRISE TO HIM!

IT'S *ALREADY* A SURPRISE TO *ME!* AND IT WILL BE TO EVERYONE ELSE, TOO! JUST IMAGINE THAT-- PAYING $50.00 FOR A SPORT COAT ...*GOLLY!* MR. ALDRICH MUST HAVE *STRUCK IT RICH!*

HELLO, AGNES... ARE YOU AVAILABLE FOR A *BIG NIGHT* TONIGHT?

?

♫ GOT A ♫ DATE WITH AN ANGEL...

HOMER, THIS MORNING YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE BROKE, AND I TOLD YOU I WAS **NOT** GIVING YOU AN ADVANCE ON YOUR ALLOWANCE!

BUT, FATHER--I DON'T NEED AN ADVANCE, WHEN I'VE GOT HENRY FOR A FRIEND.

HENRY? IS HE LENDING YOU ENOUGH MONEY FOR A **BIG NIGHT** TONIGHT?

HENRY'S NOT **LOANING**, FATHER--HE'S **TREATING!** WHEN YOUR FATHER HAS THE KIND OF MONEY MR. ALDRICH HAS, YOU CAN AFFORD TO BE A SPORT!

WHY, WHAT KIND OF MONEY **HAS** SAM ALDRICH?

THE KIND THAT CAN BUY HENRY A $50.00 SPORT COAT!

$50.00? ALDRICH SPENT $50.00 ON A SPORT COAT FOR HENRY? ARE YOU SURE?

POSITIVE, FATHER--AND MR. ALDRICH SAID HE SHOULD HAVE BOUGHT **3** OF THEM FOR HENRY, BECAUSE THE PRICE IS SO CHEAP! WHY HE MUST HAVE SO MUCH MONEY, HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT!

YOU DON'T SAY!

DID YOU HEAR?

WHAT?

SAM ALDRICH IS IN THE CHIPS -- AND THEY'RE *ALL BLUE!*

NO!

YES, NOT *NO!!* HE'S THROWING HIS MONEY AROUND ON AN EXPENSIVE WARDROBE FOR HENRY! AND HENRY IS TREATING HIS FRIENDS TO A *BIG NIGHT* TONIGHT!

BUT WHERE DID SAM ALDRICH--?

...MUST HAVE PLAYED THE STOCK MARKET. HOW ELSE CAN YOU MAKE A KILLING OVER-NIGHT?

YOU CAN ALSO LOSE YOUR SHIRT OVERNIGHT, TOO!

ALDRICH IS TOO CONSERVATIVE TO GAMBLE-- HE MUST'VE GOTTEN A GOOD TIP ON SOME SURE STOCK!

APPARENTLY A *VERY, VERY* GOOD TIP!

YOU'D THINK HE'D HAVE THE DECENCY TO LET *ME* IN ON IT. AFTER ALL, WE'RE *SUPPOSED* TO BE *FRIENDS!*

BUT WE HAVEN'T REALLY BEEN *TOO* FRIENDLY WITH THEM. WE HAVEN'T HAD THEM OVER IN WEEKS.

HELLO, SAM, THIS IS WILL BROWN. HOW ABOUT YOU AND THE MRS. COMING OVER FOR A GAME OF CANASTA?

FINE, WILL!

THE BROWNS HAVE INVITED US OVER FOR A GAME OF CANASTA.

OH, HOW NICE.

FATHER, MAY I HAVE AN ADVANCE ON MY ALLOWANCE?

OH-OH-- THERE GOES MY WIN-NINGS.

I'LL GET THE SPORT COAT.

TWO DOLLARS WILL BE ENOUGH, FATHER.

HERE...NOW REMOVE YOUR COAT FOR A MOMENT, HENRY..

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT ME TO DO, FATHER?

YES... CLOSE YOUR EYES.

KEEP THEM CLOSED, HENRY!

?

SURPRISE!!

ARE YOU SURPRISED, HENRY?

I SURE AM...

...BECAUSE THIS DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THE SPORT COAT IN THE WINDOW! THIS LOOKS EVEN BETTER!

BETTER?

GEE WHIZ, IT SURE FITS SWELL. I'LL WEAR IT ON MY DATE TONIGHT!

I'LL HAVE TO MOVE THIS BUTTON, HENRY.

BETTER TAKE IT OFF, HENRY.

HELLO, RUSSELL'S MEN'S SHOP? THIS IS SAM ALDRICH. I HAD A SPORT COAT PICKED UP AND CHARGED TO ME. I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE PRICE OF IT IS...

I'LL JUST CUT OFF THE BUTTON AND MOVE IT OVER A QUARTER OF AN INCH...

$50.00!

DON'T MOVE THAT BUTTON!

THE SPORT JACKET GOES BACK!

BUT- BUT, SAM-- IT WAS A SURPRISE FOR HENRY!

?

AND IT WAS JUST A SHOCK FOR ME! THIS SPORT COAT COSTS $50 -- NOT $12 !!

I-I THOUGHT IT LOOKED DIFFERENT.

$50.00 FOR A SPORT COAT-- UNHEARD OF! ANYWAY, I WOULDN'T HEAR OF IT!

GOOD NIGHT.

HAVE A GOOD TIME, HENRY.

SAM--HOW COULD YOU ?..AFTER YOU GAVE IT TO HIM ALREADY?

LISTEN, ALICE-- I LOVE THAT BOY AS MUCH AS YOU DO, AND I'D GIVE HIM THE SHIRT OFF MY BACK...

SLAM!

.. BUT HE CAN'T HAVE THIS SPORT COAT-- AND THAT'S FINAL!

?

PRESENTLY... HERE COME THE ALDRICHES. NOW LEAVE EVERY-THING TO ME!

DON'T MAKE IT OBVIOUS WHY WE'VE INVITED THEM!

DON'T WORRY!

HELLO.
HOW ARE YOU, WILL?
FINE, FINE... SAY--YOU'RE LOOKING PROSPEROUS! HEARD OF ANY GOOD TIPS LATELY?
LET THEM COME IN FIRST, DEAR.

SURE ..I'LL GIVE YOU A GOOD TIP...
Y-YOU WILL, SAM?
YEAH.

SAVE YOUR MONEY!
? ?

W-WELL...I DO HAVE A LITTLE SAVED, AND I'D LIKE TO INVEST IT IN A GOOD STOCK.
UH-- SHALL WE PLAY?

WHY DO YOU WANT TO PLAY THE MARKET?
WHY...? I'LL *TELL* YOU WHY--

BECAUSE I'D LIKE TO BUY MY SON, HOMER, A **$50** SPORT COAT!
YOU WOULD?

WELL, WE HAPPEN TO HAVE ONE WE'RE RETURNING. WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUY THAT ONE? IT'S A BEAUTY-- BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD IT!
YOU *CAN'T?*

LATER...

I ENJOYED THE MOVIE VERY MUCH, HENRY!

I'M GLAD, GERALDINE.

NOW PLAYING WEST LYNN

WHERE IS HENRY GOING TO TAKE US NOW, HOMER?

TO THE CLASSIEST RESTAURANT IN TOWN.

HOMER! THE ICE-CREAM PARLOR IS *THAT* WAY!

BUT THE RITZ RESTAURANT IS *THIS* WAY.

H-HOMER, WE CAN'T GO IN THERE!

SURE WE CAN, HENRY. I MADE A RESERVATION FOR US!

B-BUT, HOMER -- IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE HERE!

NOT FOR YOU, HENRY!

MR. HENRY ALDRICH'S TABLE, PLEASE.

RIGHT THIS WAY...

HENRY, I DIDN'T KNOW THEY KNEW YOU HERE.

AND THEY'LL PROBABLY NEVER FORGET ME, EITHER!

I'LL HAVE THIS ON THE THIRD LINE. I CAN'T PRONOUNCE IT...

I'LL HAVE PHEASANT UNDER GLASS.

UH...I'LL HAVE ***WATER IN THE GLASS!***

ONE HOUR LATER...

HENRY, ALL YOU ORDERED WAS A GLASS OF WATER AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN DRINK IT!

I'VE BEEN SAVING IT FOR WHEN I'LL NEED IT, GERALDINE... AND I THINK THAT'S GOING TO BE RIGHT AWAY!

YOUR CHECK, SIR.

CHEQUE

ER-- I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO THE MANAGER.

IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?

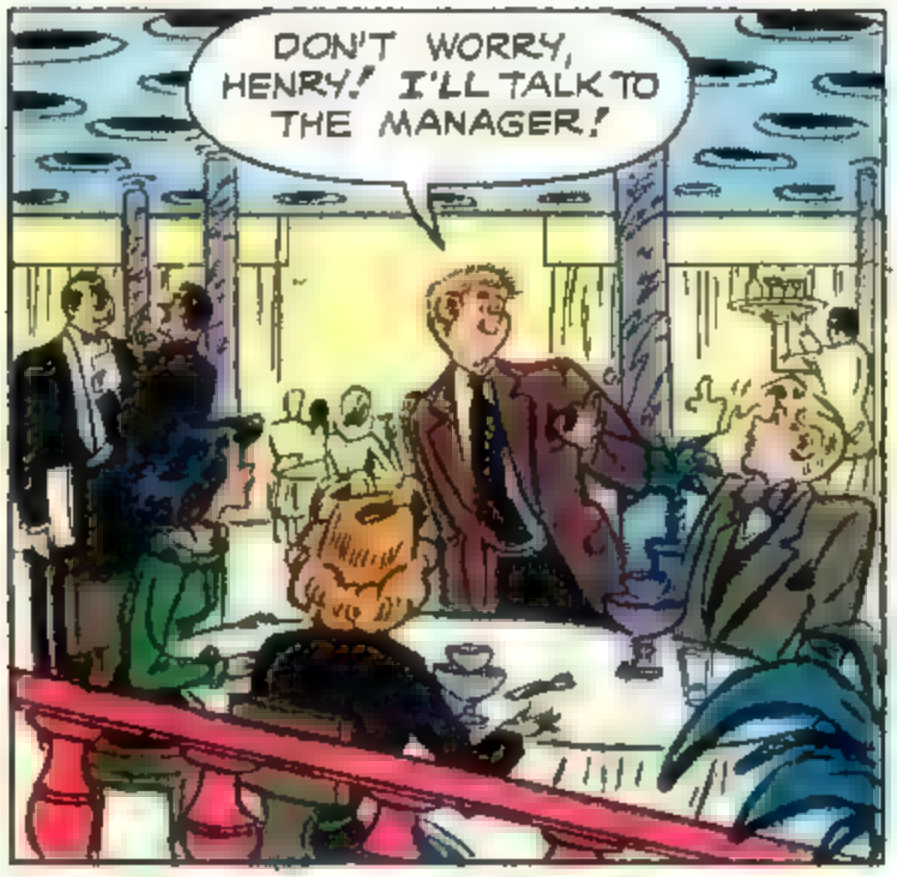
YES...

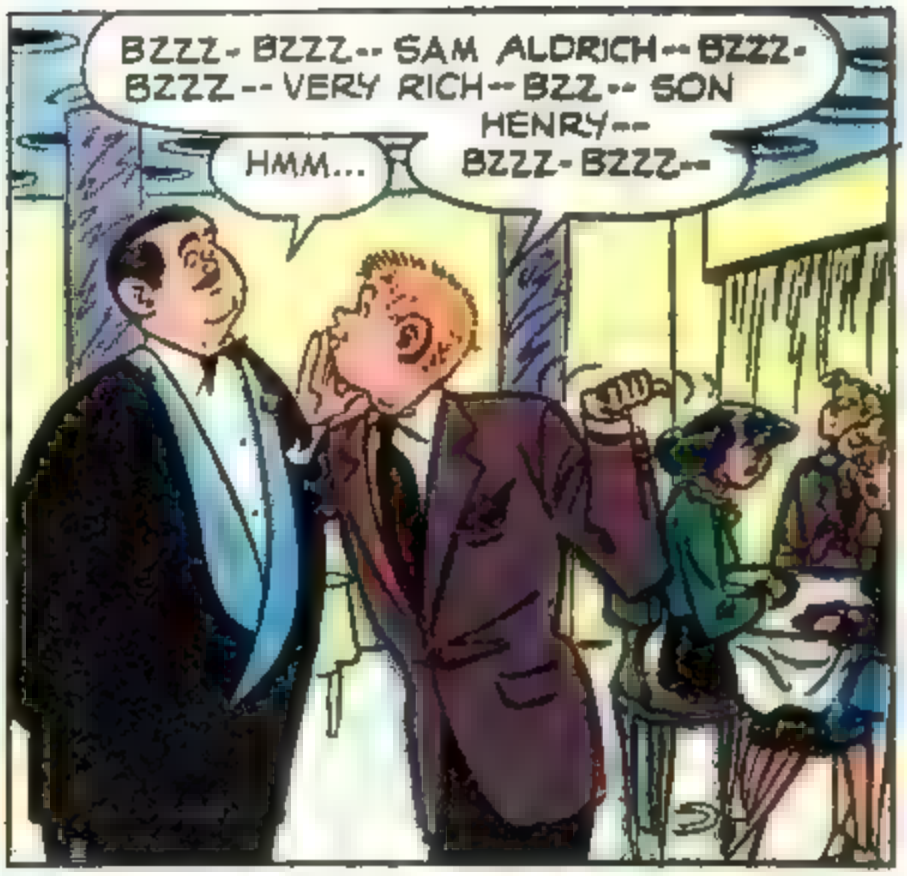
...I CAN'T PAY THE CHECK!

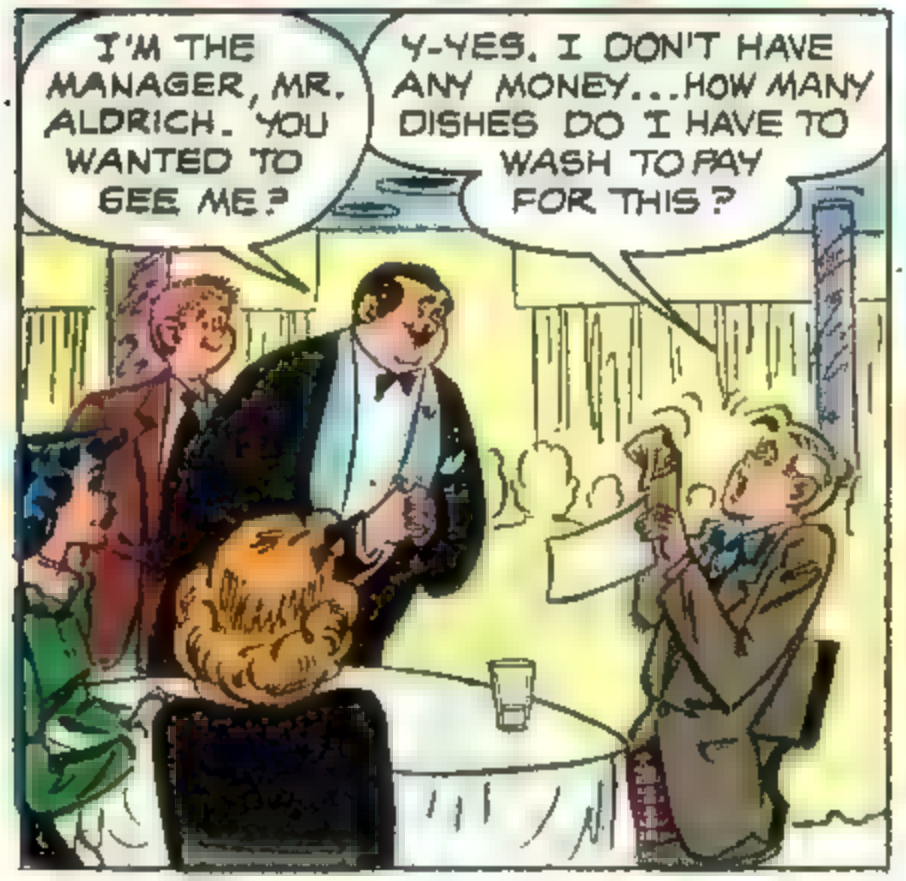
HMM...I WON'T HAVE TO ***TAKE*** YOU TO THE MANAGER. HE'LL BE OVER TO SEE ***YOU!***

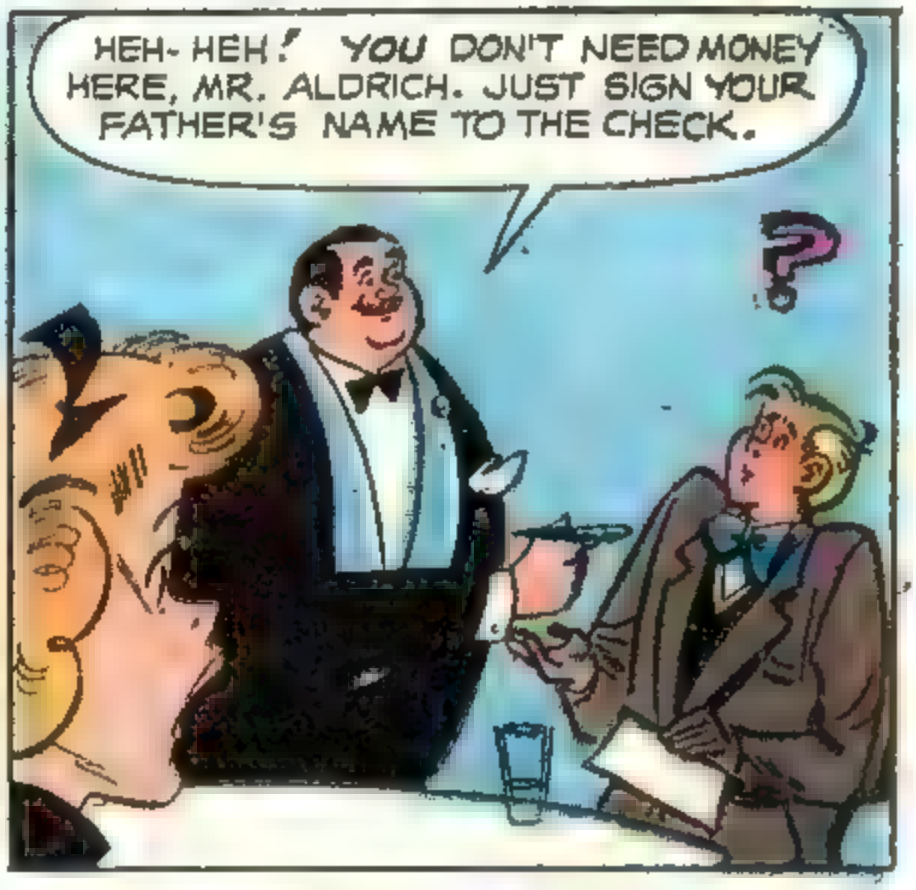
HENRY...YOU MEAN YOU HAVEN'T ANY MONEY WITH YOU?

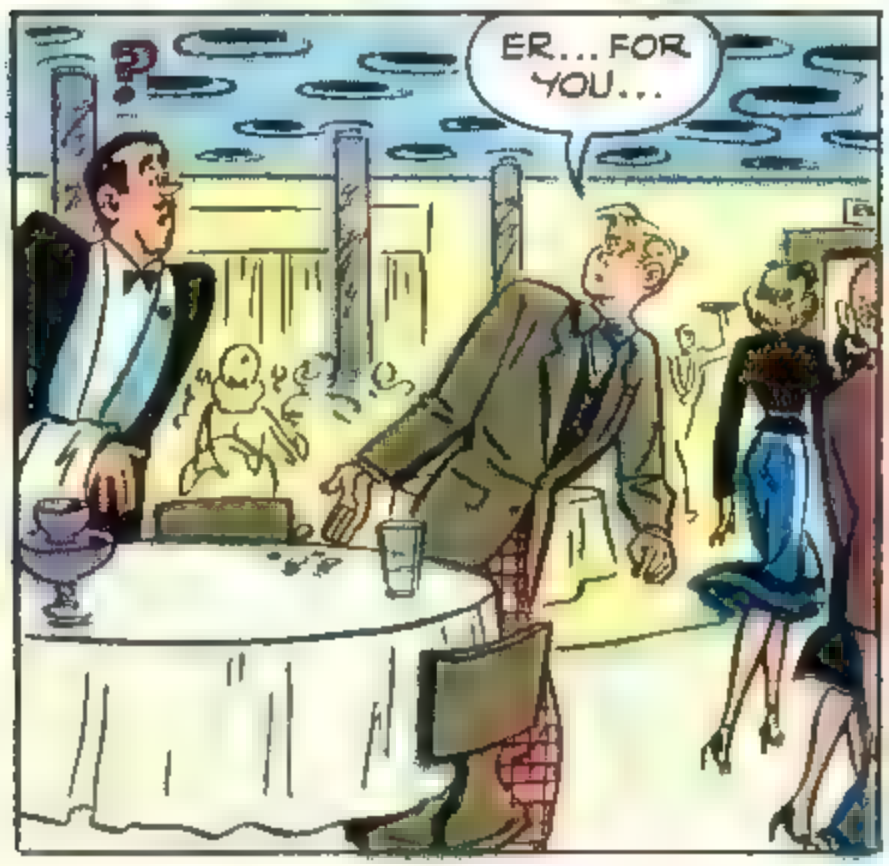
80¢

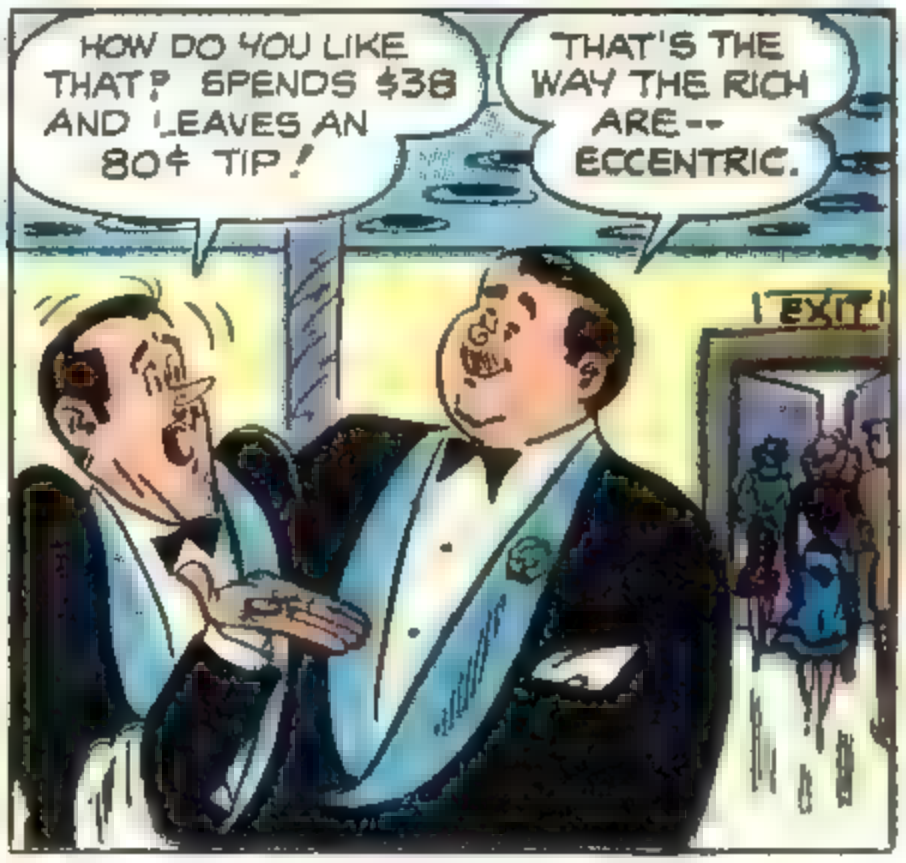

DON'T WORRY, HENRY! I'LL TALK TO THE MANAGER!


BZZZ- BZZZ-- SAM ALDRICH-- BZZZ- BZZZ-- VERY RICH-- BZZ-- SON HENRY-- BZZZ- BZZZ--
HMM...


I'M THE MANAGER, MR. ALDRICH. YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
Y-YES. I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY...HOW MANY DISHES DO I HAVE TO WASH TO PAY FOR THIS?


HEH- HEH! YOU DON'T NEED MONEY HERE, MR. ALDRICH. JUST SIGN YOUR FATHER'S NAME TO THE CHECK.
?


ER... FOR YOU...


HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT? SPENDS $38 AND LEAVES AN 80¢ TIP!
THAT'S THE WAY THE RICH ARE-- ECCENTRIC.
EXIT

SHORTLY...

MOTHER... FATHER...WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING UP SO LATE?

WAITING FOR YOU, HENRY.

WE'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU.

WE'VE DECIDED TO LET *YOU KEEP IT!!*

B-BUT...

?

?

WEAR IT WELL, HENRY.

I-I REALLY CAN'T ACCEPT IT, FATHER. $50 IS TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO SPEND ON A SPORT COAT FOR ME. $12 WOULD'VE BEEN ENOUGH.

BUT YOUR FATHER WANTS YOU TO HAVE IT, HENRY!

YES, KEEP IT, HENRY.

GEE WHIZ!! WHAT HOMER TOLD ME IS TRUE...YOU *DID* STRIKE IT RICH, EH, FATHER?

?

?

NOW, I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'LL MIND THE BILL FROM THE RITZ FOR $38.

WHAT?

?

TAKE OFF THAT COAT!

NEXT DAY...

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, HOMER... IF THEY SWITCHED COATS IN THE WINDOW...

BUT IF I HADN'T FORCED YOU TO TAKE US TO THE RITZ, YOUR FATHER WOULD'VE LET YOU KEEP THE SPORT COAT IN SPITE OF THE COST.

YEH. WHEN I TOLD HIM ABOUT THE $38, HE SURE BLEW HIS TOP!

AND SO HE TOOK BACK THE $50 SPORT COAT...

WAIT A MINUTE, HENRY... YOUR FATHER GYPPED YOU OUT OF $12!

HUH...?

THE COAT COST $50-- RIGHT?

YEH...

AND THE RITZ BILL WAS ONLY $38-- RIGHT?

YEH..

THERE'S A $12 DIFFERENCE.

I'M GOING TO FORGET ABOUT IT, HOMER.

THAT'S UP TO YOU, HENRY, BUT I WOULDN'T LET MY FATHER GET AWAY WITH GYPPING ME!

THAT NIGHT...

HENRY-- LOOK! THE SPORT COAT YOU FIRST SAW IN THE WINDOW!

WELL, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF YOUR FATHER NOW, HENRY?

GOSH...

YOU ARE HONEST!

THE END

HOMER

LOOK, AGNES-- ALL WASHED AND SHINY! HOW ABOUT GOING FOR A RIDE?

OH-- I'M SORRY, HOMER-- BUT I CAN'T...

WHY, WHAT'S COOKIN'?

NOTHING YET-- BUT SOMETHING WILL BE...

...MY MOTHER IS ALLOWING *ME* TO COOK DINNER!

WHAT'S SO WONDERFUL ABOUT IT?

ISN'T THAT WONDERFUL?

BUT, HOMER-- YOU *DO* WANT ME TO LEARN TO BE A GOOD COOK, DON'T YOU?

WHO CARES?

HOMER BROWN, IS THAT ***YOUR*** WAY OF TELLING ME THAT YOU ***NEVER*** HOPE TO BE ***MY HUSBAND!***

WHAT'S ***THAT*** GOT TO DO WITH YOUR LEARNING TO COOK?

WELL, IF YOU ***DO*** INTEND TO MARRY ME SOMEDAY, YOU SHOULD ***WANT*** ME TO KNOW HOW TO COOK!

BY THAT TIME, COOKING W.LL BE OUT-MODED...

...THEY'LL HAVE LITTLE TINY CONCENTRATED FOOD PILLS INSTEAD OF COOKED MEALS!

I READ ABOUT THAT, TOO, HOMER. BUT IT'S NOT PERFECTED YET.

BY THE TIME ***WE*** GET MARRIED, THEY'LL HAVE IT ALL PERFECTED!

HMPH! IF I'M GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT ***THAT*** LONG FOR YOU TO PROPOSE TO ME...

...WE MIGHT AS WELL SAY ***GOOD-BYE NOW!***

SLAM!

G-GOSH! NOW AGNES IS ANGRY WITH ME!

AND IT'S ALL ON ACCOUNT OF THOSE CONCENTRATED FOOD-PILLS I READ ABOUT IN YESTERDAY'S NEWSPAPER!

I'D BETTER FIND THAT PAPER AND LOOK UP THE NAME OF THE MAN WHO'S WORKING ON THOSE PILLS.

MOTHER, HAVE YOJ SEEN YESTER-DAY'S PAPER?

YES, THANK YOU, HOMER. I'VE ALREADY SEEN IT!

I MEAN, WHERE IS IT?

OH, I DON'T KNOW. BUT WHY DON'T YOU READ TODAY'S PAPER...IT WAS JUST DELIVERED.

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING IN ***YESTERDAY'S*** PAPERS I'VE GOT TO FIND...IT'S ABOUT THE CONCENTRATED FOOD PILLS SOMEONE IS INVENTING.

OH, YES... PROFESSOR LIGHTMEAL!

THAT'S RIGHT--THAT WAS HIS NAME...PROFESSOR LIGHTMEAL! DID IT SAY WHERE HE LIVES?

NO, BUT I BELIEVE IT SAID HIS LABORATORY IS IN ABBOTT CITY.

GEE--YOU'RE WONDERFUL, MOTHER--THANKS!

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, HOMER?

I'LL TELL YOU LATER, MOTHER... WHEN I GET BACK FROM ABBOTT CITY!

?

ABBOTT CITY

LATER--IN ABBOTT CITY...

CAN YOU PLEASE TELL ME WHERE PROFESSOR LIGHT-MEAL'S LABORATORY IS?

YOU MEAN THE ONE WHO'S MAKING THOSE PILLS? YEAH...

LABORATORY
PROF. LIGHTMEAL

I HOPE THE PROFESSOR ISN'T A *PILL* HIMSELF!

NO ONE SEEMS TO BE ANSWERING THE DOOR!

IT...IT'S OPEN..

THAT MUST BE THE PROFESSOR..

ER-- PARDON ME...

OOP!

...NOW, DO YOU SEE WHAT YOU MADE ME DO? YOU MADE ME PUT IN *TOO MUCH!*

OH-- I-I'M AWFULLY SORRY, PROFESSOR...

BUT WAIT! TOO MUCH IS JUST WHAT IT NEEDED! I THINK I'VE GOT IT!!

GOT WHAT, PROFESSOR?

CONCENTRATED NOODLE SOUP IN PILL FORM! HERE -- TRY ONE!

THANKS!

?

WELL. ? WELL ?

:GULP:

IT COULD USE JUST A PINCH MORE OF SALT.

HMM ..

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO SEE ME ABOUT?

ABOUT MY GIRL FRIEND, AGNES... I TOLD HER THAT BY THE TIME WE GET MARRIED, SHE WON'T HAVE TO COOK, BECAUSE WE'LL HAVE OUR MEALS IN PILL FORM...

SO SHE THINKS I DON'T WANT TO MARRY HER FOR A LONG, LONG TIME TO COME! BUT IF I CAN SHOW HER THAT THESE PILLS ARE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE...

WELL, THEY'RE NOT QUITE PERFECTED YET, BUT.

BOY— IT WAS SURE NICE OF THE PROFESSOR TO GIVE ME ALL THESE PILLS...

...NOW, I CAN TELL AGNES SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ANGRY!

RING!

AGNES... YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ANGRY--

I DO SO, HOMER!

I BURNED THE DINNER, AND MY MOTHER RELIED ON ME!

DON'T WORRY, AGNES...

...I BROUGHT A DINNER FIT FOR A KING!!

WHERE?

IN HERE!

HOMER, I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR JOKES!

I'M SERIOUS, AGNES... THE RED ONES ARE ROAST BEEF... THE YELLOW ONES ARE FILLET OF SOLE... THE BLUE ONES ARE ICE CREAM... AND...

I'LL BET YOUR MOTHER WILL SURE BE SURPRISED WHEN SHE COMES HOME.

SHE SURE WILL, HOMER. ER--DO WE SERVE THE SOUP PILLS IN REGULAR BOWLS?

OOPS!

MAYBE EYECUPS WOULD...

CAREFUL!!

NOW LOOK WHAT YOU DID, EDGAR-- YOU SPILLED THE *DINNER* ALL OVER THE FLOOR!

?

OH, DEAR--

RING!

AND THAT MUST BE MOTHER ON THE PHONE!

OH... WONDERFUL, MOTHER!

HOMER--MY MOTHER JUST PHONED TO SAY THAT MY FATHER IS ASKING US *OUT* FOR DINNER!

LATER...

MOTHER... I'M SO GLAD WE'RE GOING OUT FOR DINNER!

IS THAT HOMER PLAYING ON THE FLOOR WITH EDGAR?

?

LOOK!! I JUST HIT EDGAR'S ROAST BEEF WITH MY CHICKEN CHOW MEIN!

YEH--BUT I'VE STILL GOT A POCKETFUL OF *ICE CREAM!*

END

Henry Aldrich and the Christmas Party

(Continued from inside front cover)

So Henry got the job back again, along with details of the arrangements and duties.

He was silently congratulating himself when Homer walked over.

"What's this talk of Santa Claus, anyway?" Homer asked.

Henry frowned, but George smiled, "Henry here, is going to be Santa at the Girls' Club party. Isn't that *nice*, Homer?"

"Huh? It sure is!" said Homer, turning toward Henry. "I guess you knew all the girls will be there and they're having a party of their own afterwards . . . !"

Henry scowled, "Sh-sh!"

"What's that?" George snapped, "wait a second, Henry, you misrepresented the facts. I want that job back!"

But Henry refused, saying the bargain was closed.

George became angry, raised his voice and started to wave his arms. A pile of "Kornie-Krispies" tumbled to the floor. Henry jumped to avoid the avalanche and brought down a stack of canned tomatoes and several jars of pickled beets. When a lot of cane sugar boxes, paper napkins and scouring powder came down, and when the manager of the market appeared, Henry and Homer beat a hasty retreat, leaving George to attempt an explanation.

* * * * *

Santa Claus was supposed to arrive at the Christmas party at six o'clock, but Henry planned to show up much earlier. He felt that it would be preferable to be the first Santa on hand. He was putting on his white whiskers Friday night when Homer called.

"Henry," Homer warned, "I just saw a Santa Claus come out of the Bigelow house and turn down Elm Street. I thought you'd be interested!"

"Why, the sneak, Bigelow," Henry growled, "trying to beat me down there. Say, Homer, can I use your car?"

"Sorry, Henry, it's laid up with ignition trouble."

Henry was worried. He thanked Homer, finished dressing as fast as he could and rushed out.

"Let's see," he said to himself as he puffed along the street in his red outfit, "I could cut off nearly five minutes if I crossed through a couple of back yards."

He turned down an alley and was just climbing over the Jenkinson's back fence when a voice cried out, "Oh, Daddy, look, Santa Claus!"

Henry had been seen by little Billy Jenkinson.

"Daddy, why is he here now?"

"And in our back yard too!" growled Mr. Jenkinson. "Hey, you," he cried, "just a minute, there!"

Henry retreated back over the fence, as fast as possible, and down the alley.

Mr. Jenkinson looked thoughtfully at a piece of red cloth caught on the fence and wondered exactly how he was going to explain Santa's strange behavior to little Billy.

When Henry arrived at the auditorium, he was still five minutes early, but George Bigelow was just coming up the school walk at the same time.

Inside, the whole group was on edge waiting for the arrival of Santa Claus. Time passed. He was overdue and the girls were doing their best to reassure the children.

"Maybe there really *isn't* a Santa Claus, huh, Miss Love?" asked a little boy.

"Certainly there is!" answered Geraldine bravely, "but he should be here by now . . ."

"Look, Miss Love," shouted the little boy, pointing out the window, "look, everybody!"

"There are *two* Santa Clauses!"

"Yes, see, they're outside, wrestlin' in the snow!"

* * * * *

It was several days before Geraldine would speak to Henry or George. And it wasn't until long after Christmas that the thought of Santa Claus ceased to accompany rather unpleasant memories for Henry.

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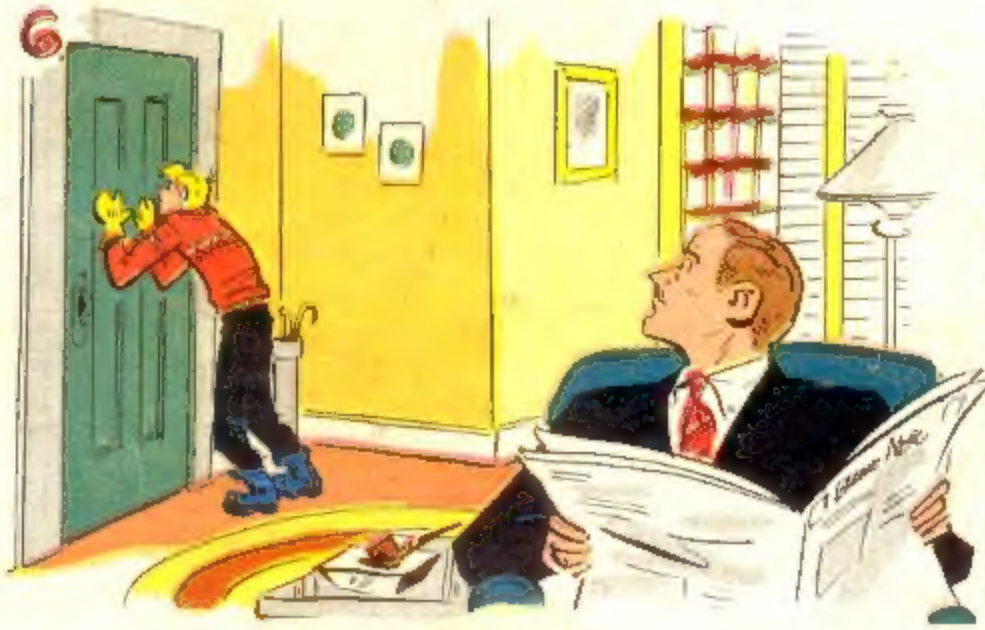

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